

Transformation of the Dragon – China’s Image in the Polish Media

This paper was written as a part of a wider research project, conducted in 2014¹ and aimed to establish the image of migrants and foreign ethnic groups in the Polish media. One of interesting findings of this research was a surprisingly positive image of China and the Chinese in the Polish media (at least during the period included in the research time frame – the second half of 2013). Such a relatively positive image was contradictory to the stereotypical belief that China is still being depicted in the Polish media mainly as a Communist and totalitarian, undeveloped country. Moreover, the problem of China and Chinese image in media content has not been popular among the scholars engaged in the Polish academic discourse. Actually, during our research we found only three articles referring to this issue: one referring strictly to image of China and the Chinese in the Polish media (Bukowski, 2014), and two of them focusing on the image of different ethnic groups in the Polish media (Mrozowski, 1997; Jóźwiak, Konieczna-Sałamatin & Tudorowski, 2010), where China was a minor point of interest.

Therefore, since our research interests include China’s media image in the world, we decided to pay more attention to the outcome of the broader research and analyze the image of China in the Polish media in a more detailed way.

However, the very notion of a country image had been so widely discussed by numerous scholars from various fields, that we decided to provide a short overview of some of the definitions that had been worked out

¹ Moreover it is necessary to mention that the research was also a part of broader interdisciplinary project “High qualified migrants and the Polish labour market” financed by “European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals”.

by them. This notion is rooted, to some extent, in the Lippmann's stereotype, and had been used mostly in three contexts: tourism, marketing, and international relations. It is a bit ironic, though, since one of the first "imagologists", Kenneth Boulding, stated that "the national image is basically a lie, or at least a perspective distortion of the truth" (1959, p. 122). Quite frequently the term „national image” is substituted with „country image”, but the latter should be applied in the tourism and marketing contexts. According to Jenes (2012), the proliferation of image-related academic project dates back to the early 2000's, but first such works were conducted in the USA as early as in 1930s (Katz & Braly, 1933). The national image itself has started to gain importance and popularity with the shortening distances between countries due to globalization, and countries' overall reputation has become a focal point in their domestic and international policies. In 1970, Nagashima defined the national image as "the picture, the reputation, the stereotype that businessmen and consumers attach to products of a specific country", such an image consisted of "representative products, national characteristics, economic and political background, history, and traditions" (quoted in Zhou, Chen & Wu, 2012, p. 767).

From the political and psychological perspective, Nimmo and Savage (1976) described the image as "a human construct imposed on array of perceived attributes projected by an object, event or a person", consisting of a subjective understanding of things (quoted in Newman, 1994, pp. 91–92). This definition emphasizes two aspects of an image – projection and perception and the fact, that these two do not necessarily have to be coherent or compatible. Such a cognitive perspective of an image is shared by many scholars (see for example Boulding, 1959; Wang, 2008). One of them is also Kunczik, who specifically defined a national image as a "cognitive representation that a person holds of a given country, what a person believes to be true about a nation and its people" (1997, p. 47). We believe, that the last definition suits our research attitude and, at least to some extent, is influenced by the image presented in the media.

Methodology of the research

The content of our database was a download from the on-line Polish media, both Internet news portals and on-line versions of popular journals and magazines. Table 1 presents the sources we used for gathering data for our research.

The initial database was created by downloading all the articles that contained chosen keywords related to particular countries, supplemented with more general words, such as "foreigner", "migrant", etc. and con-

Table 1: Data sources used in the analysis

Title	Media type	Average circulation	Characteristics ¹
Fakt	Daily newspaper	474 418	Tabloid
Super Express	Daily newspaper	260 743	Tabloid
Gazeta Wyborcza	Daily newspaper	278 300	Centrist-left, liberal
Gazeta Polska Codziennie	Daily newspaper	86 416	Rightist, conservative, with tabloid-like tendencies
Rzeczpospolita	Daily newspaper	69 256	Centrist, conservative
Nasz Dziennik	Daily newspaper	No data	Ultra-rightist, Roman-Catholic
Dziennik Gazeta Prawna	Daily newspaper	102 238	Centrist, conservative
Gość Niedzielny	Weekly magazine	200 113	Conservative, Roman-Catholic
Newsweek Polska	Weekly magazine	168 990	Centrist
Polityka	Weekly magazine	175 400	Centrist-leftist, liberal
Tygodnik Do Rzeczy	Weekly magazine	154 382	Rightist, conservative
Wprost	Weekly magazine	122 984	Centrist
Gazeta Polska	Weekly magazine	135 255	Rightist, conservative
Onet.pl	Internet news portal	5 205 141*	Centrist, various content
Gazeta.pl	Internet news portal	4 453 316*	Leftist tendencies, many articles from <i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>
wp.pl	Internet news portal	5 994 541*	Centrist, mainly short news stories
Interia.pl	Internet news portal	2 239 893*	Rightist tendencies, short news, sparse longer editorials

¹ Due to the lack of professional, reliable sources concerning the ideological and/or political character of particular Polish newspapers, magazines and news portals, information about the character of these sources is based on Authors' own knowledge and statements published by some of these sources.

* Unique visitors in February 2013

Source: own elaboration, based on www.wirtualnemedial.pl, www.teleskop.org.pl (accessed: 20/11/2015).

sisted of 8096 articles. The scope of the initial research project was much broader and focused on different issues, therefore for the purpose of the present research we filtered this database on the basis of the presence of China-related codes, and analyzed only 220 cases in which China was mentioned in some way.

The whole coding and analysis process was performed by employing QDA Data Miner and QDA Wordstat software. In the first step, we created a concise dictionary, in which we included all the words that appeared in the initial database more than 50 times. All of them were either assigned as keywords to some category or categorized as irrelevant. Although this specific dictionary was created for the purpose of this particular research, most of the categories and subcategories to which the keywords were assigned, were been developed for other languages (namely English, Spanish, and Portuguese), during our earlier media-related research projects. Since our main research interest was focused on the issue of the emotional connotations, the first categories that were created consisted of keywords classified as either positive or negative. Apart from these “emotional” sets of keywords, many other categories, consisting of keywords related to various issues, like politics, economy, culture, conflicts, etc., were used as well.

Quantitative analysis

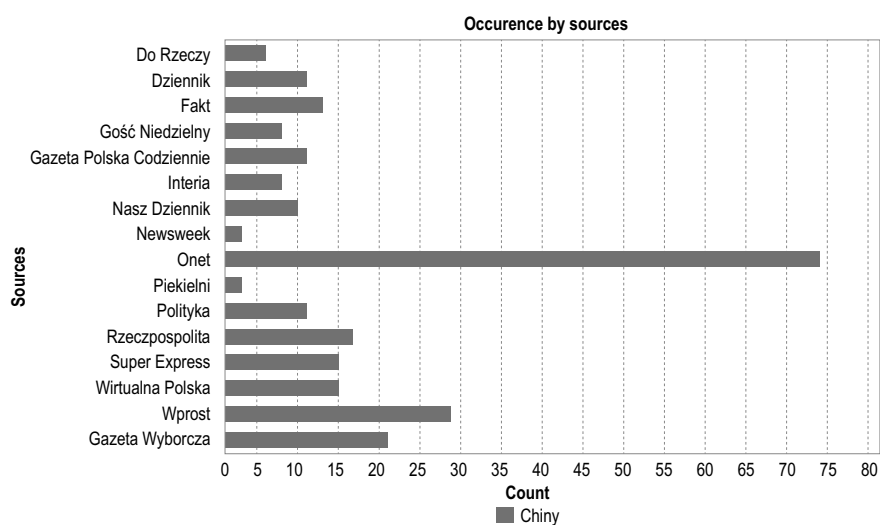
Data presented in Table 2 show that the focus of the Polish media is directed at Poland’s neighbors: China, Russia, Ukraine, and at a country typically considered to be the world leading force – the USA. Despite the steady rise of the political and economic role of the People’s Republic of China, this country does not draw too much attention of Polish news agencies; in the investigated period, the frequency of China-related references was lower than this of Hungary, Spain or Egypt.

There is one methodological remark that we need to make before proceeding to the next part of the analysis. On the one hand, while analyzing the content of China related articles in the database, we notice a prevalence of articles published by onet.pl (see Table 3), which might lead to the conclusion, that the overall image of China and the Chinese is strongly influenced by this information source. On the other hand, Onet is one of the biggest Polish Internet portals (with the number of unique visitors amounting to as many as 5 205 141 in February 2013). It might be assumed, that its place among Polish news sources would allow this the news portal to influence the Polish audience significantly, thus reducing the above-mentioned bias.

Table 2: Frequency of nations mentioned in the database

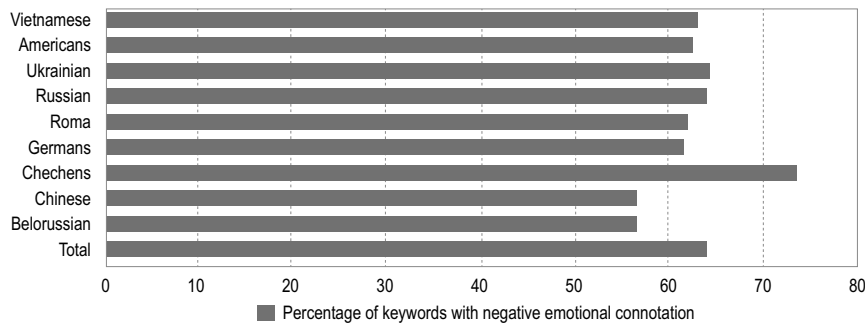
	Frequency	Cases	% cases
Russia	8755	1608	27,70
Germany	6677	1716	23,20
Ukraine	5067	775	10,50
USA	3367	1104	14,90
France	1806	708	9,60
Hungary	1389	412	5,60
Czech Republic	1114	439	5,90
UK	1058	503	6,80
Spain	972	412	5,60
Egypt	860	200	2,70
Syria	637	181	2,40
Italy	518	346	4,70
China	500	220	3,00
Bulgaria	494	233	3,10
Norway	486	234	3,20
Lithuania	483	230	3,10
Belarus	440	169	2,30

Source: results of research.

**Graph 1:** China-related articles by sources

Source: results of research.

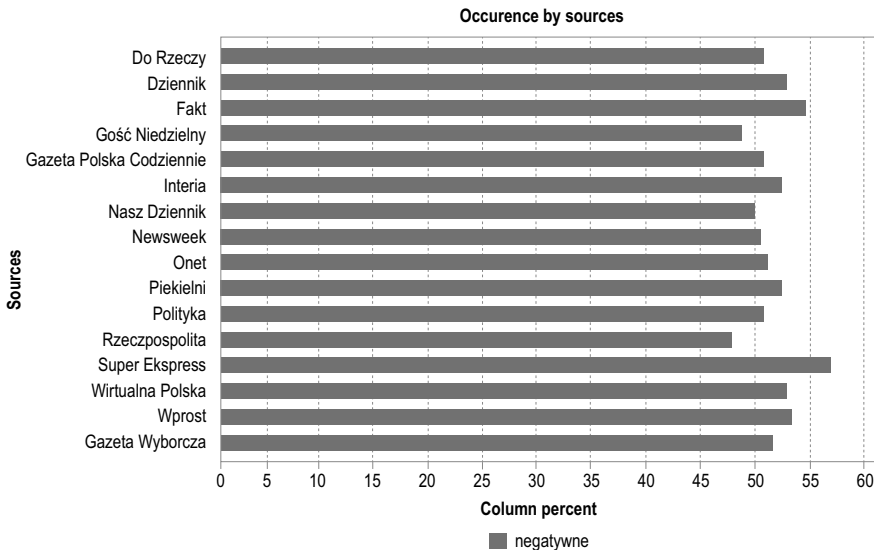
Although China is far from being a point of focus of the Polish media, one of the most surprising findings of our study was the fact, that China actually was among the most positively depicted counties of the whole group which we took into account (see Table 3).



Graph 2: Ratio of keywords with negative connotation by nation

Source: results of research.

As we can see in Table 3, generally in the articles where preferences to particular countries have appeared, we are dealing with a slight prevalence of negatively associated keywords over the positive ones. It is probably related to the nature of contemporary media content, which is fo-



Graph 3: Ratio of keywords with negative connotation in China related articles by source

Source: results of research.

cused more on sensation, tragedy, or any other negative references over the positive ones. Nevertheless, the most positive reaction we can see in cases of Chinese and Belorussians, while the most negative was in the case of Chechens. It is worth to mention that it is probably related to the fact that China was presented mostly in a contemporary context, while the references to Ukraine, Russia and, to some extent Germany, were relatively often placed in some historical context, usually related to conflicts and their consequences. The Chechen image in the Polish media, on the other hand, was strongly influenced by terrorism-related issues.

There were no significant differences in the image of China and the Chinese between particular sources. However, it is worth to mention that in general, the most negative picture was presented by the tabloid press (which is generally related to sensational character of this media). At the other end of the continuum, there was the image created by “Rzeczpospolita”, which is a newspaper with strong economical background (although recently of a rather conservative character).

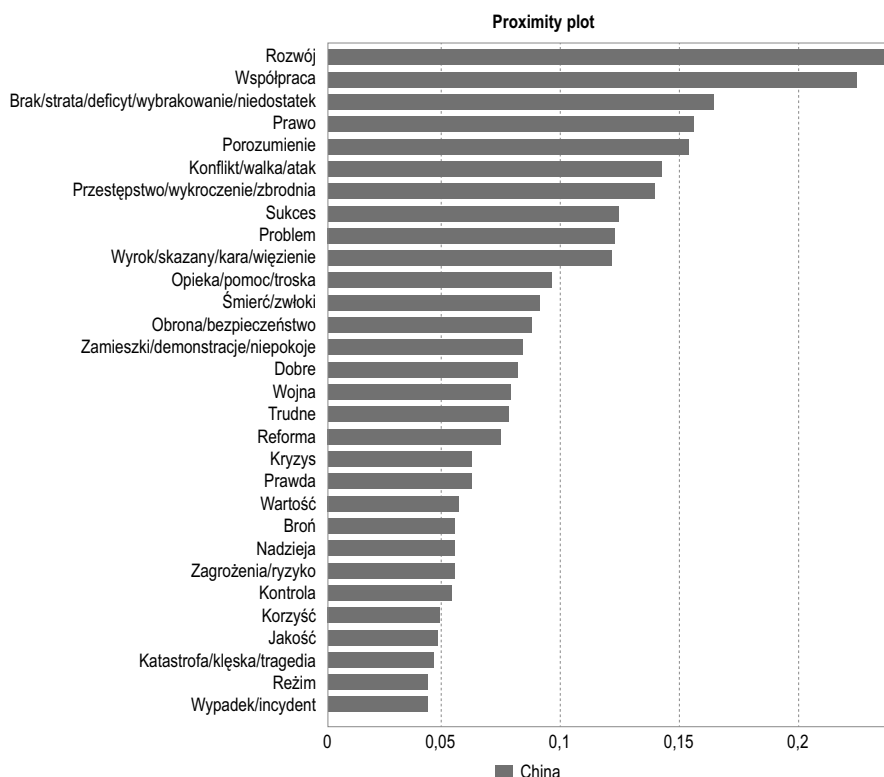
Table 3: Most frequent categories in China-related articles

	Frequency	No cases	% cases
Law	179	73	30,50
Development	144	74	31,00
Lost/defficiency/lack/shortage	140	77	32,20
Success	124	65	27,20
Agreement	117	48	20,10
Cooperation	107	40	16,70
Attack	98	52	21,80
War	94	38	15,90
Problem	93	52	21,80
Help	85	42	17,60

Source: results of research.

The generally relatively positive image of China and the Chinese in the Polish media is supported by the above table, presenting the most frequent categories appearing in the articles where there were China- or the Chinese-related references. As it can be observed above, the dominant categories are those positively associated – mostly in the context of cooperation and development – which might suggest, that China is mostly perceived as a quickly developing country, and from the perspective of economic cooperation.

This reasoning is even clearer while analyzing the proximity plot above. The categories most frequently co-occurring with China category were



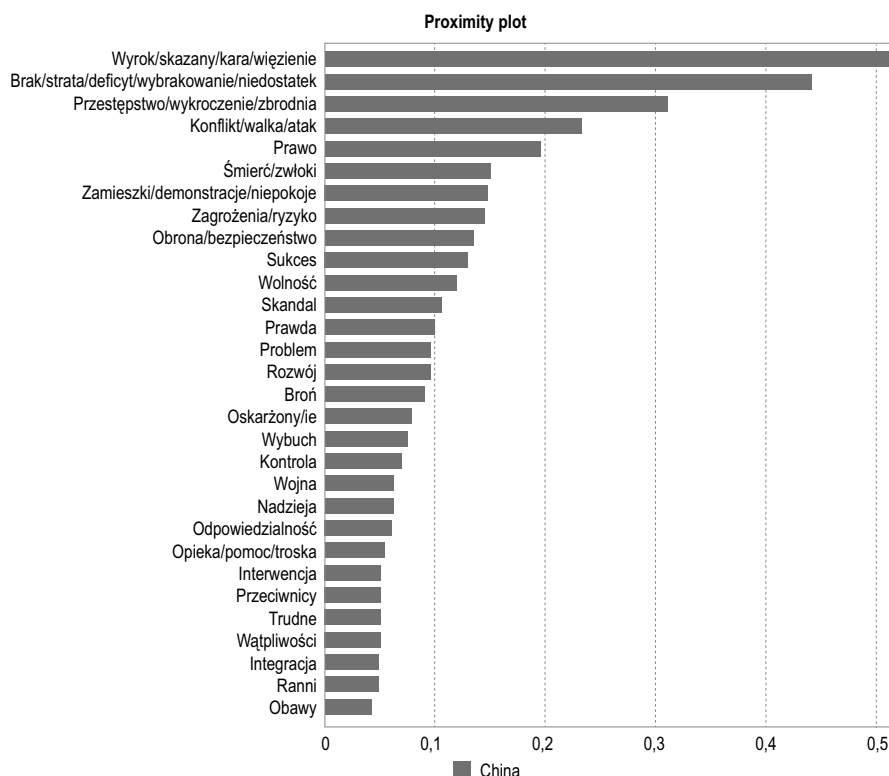
Graph 4: China and categories with positive and negative emotional connotation

Source: results of research.

related with cooperation and development. It seems to be a significantly strong argument supporting the hypotheses that nowadays in Poland, China is mainly presented from an economic and developmental perspective, which is in contradiction with the image of China widespread in the 1990s, namely the Communist regime, with violating the humans rights as one of its main features.

However, it is worth to mention that such a picture in some of the newspapers and magazines such as *Gazeta Wyborcza* (which is strongly associated with a pro-democratic approach), China is not presented from such a positive perspective, related to its economical position.

As it can be observed, the picture of China in *Gazeta Wyborcza* is much closer to the stereotypical one than the general image in the Polish media. China category most often co-occurs with negatively associated categories like prison, punishment, deficit, crime and conflict/attack. It seems that the image of China and the Chinese in *Gazeta*



Graph 5: China and categories with positive and negative emotional connotation in *Gazeta Wyborcza*

Source: results of research.

Wyborcza has not changed significantly since 1990s. The overall image of China is much more positive and has changed its point of focus from political, human rights oriented discourse, to a much more pragmatic image, related to China's economic development and economic reforms success.

It is worth to mention that these remarks seem to correspond with the results of the authors' other research conducted in 2011, and related to the image of China and the Chinese in the Zambian and Angolan media (Jura & Kalużyńska, 2013). In this particular article we provided arguments supporting the thesis that the source of the Chinese soft power in Africa does not consist (as it was argued by Nye [2004, location 299]) of issues related to politics (obviously, not the democracy either) nor culture, but with economy and investment in cooperation. The outputs of the quantitative analysis suggest that a similar situation exists also in Poland.

Qualitative analysis

After completing the quantitative part of the analysis, we decided to take a closer look at the details of the China-related articles from the Polish media. The whole database consisted of 220 articles. After reading all of them, we classified as many as 139 as either mentioning China in a most detailed way, or focusing on this country as the main subject.

This group was later on coded on the basis of the main context; some topics appeared more frequently, but there was also a group of codes that were assigned to only one article in the base. Each article was coded with only one code that best suited its general focus. Moreover, due to the different focus of the content, we decided to exclude the articles published by tabloids from the first part of the qualitative analysis, and analyze them separately.

During the analyzed period, China was most frequently mentioned (22 cases) as a country of an important position on the international scene, both in a regional context and also as a global country. Let us present and analyze some of the most interesting China-related remarks from this group.

“G20 is an informal club, founded in 2008, after the financial crisis. Among its members there are 19 biggest world economies and EU. Among them there are [...] China [...]” (Gość Niedzielny, 2013/09/05)

Numerous remarks about the place of the Chinese economy in the world and the fact that it belongs to the group of the biggest world economies appeared; in some texts China was also mentioned as a member of other regional and international organizations of different character.

“Also the Chinese express their interest in Ukraine. [...] That’s why president Wiktor Janukowycz has visited the Middle Kingdom, in spite of the political storm in Ukraine. [...] President Wiktor Janukowycz is lobbying in China to obtain loans and investments.” (Polityka, 2013/12/05)

The above quotation appeared in a text that was not focused on China, but described “local”, i.e. European issues. However, it could not be missed that China’s economic position places this country on the top of the list of desired allies of any head of state that might get into troublesome situation, either due to the domestic or international issues. The importance of this information for an average Polish reader is rather high, since the situation of Ukraine had been widely present in all the media, therefore the fact that Janukowycz decided to leave the country in

spite of the domestic unrest emphasizes the China's possible influence on the region's political situation.

“The White House asked Beijing to put pressure on North Korea. [...] »It is obvious that China is able to influence North Korea«. We would like them to use that influence to change the Pyongyang's policy.” (wp.pl, 2013/04/02)

As we can see, the importance of China is noticed not only by smaller countries. The word of the White House's representative prove that the Chinese are not only treated as equals by the Americans, but would also serve as the only mean to influence the biggest regional troublemaker, namely North Korea. Again, due to the Polish historical heritage, the issue of North Korea is rather well known to the Polish audience and the readers would be able to appreciate China's role in this type of international relations.

The next most numerous group of codes (16) was assigned to the texts that covered various topics, and their only common feature was the fact that China was mentioned there in some kind of culture-related context. Among them there were some topics related to history, more or less precisely described tourism etc. Again, we chose some of the most interesting quotations to include in this analysis.

“From China to Tomaszów Mazowiecki. [...] Staff sergeant Karasze-wski was born in 1915 in Harbin, China.”

Above, we quoted only one sentence from the text about an important local hero. It could be assumed that most of the readers would not know about the Polish past of Harbin. However, after being exposed to the above information they might start to wonder, how is it possible that a person from Tomaszów Mazowiecki in central Poland, was born so far away; and possibly, eventually they might think about China as not such a distant country.

“In the night the Taliban attacked the Nanga Parbat base. They shot nine climbers from Ukraine, China and Russia and a Nepali guide.”

Although many Poles perceive China as a strange and exotic place (we will focus on that image in a while), the above sentence serves as an example of placing the Chinese among the “civilized” people, since they were mentioned as climbers, together with the Russians and Ukrainians, not with the local, Nepali guide.

“Prices of Chinese art have been raising for the last 50 years. [...] During the Chinese wares auctions held by Desa, their public consists

mostly of the Chinese. [...] Art galleries of Warsaw are often visited by tourists from China. They do know what they are looking for, and they have knowledge about art.”

Sometimes in Poland a phrase “the Ming dynasty china” is used as an idiom to describe something really valuable; this quotation presents the Chinese as not only the heirs of the long lasting tradition of producing art objects, but also as well-educated tourists, who not only could afford an inter-continental trip, but also buy rather pricey wares in Polish art galleries (and, therefore, they support the Polish economy).

Unfortunately, there are also some shades on the China’s image we analyzed. So far the colors were maybe not bright, but at least not really dark. The next code, assigned to 11 cases, included articles in which China was presented as either a regime-supporting or an oppressive country.

“This cooperation broke down after the American invasion of Iraq, when Russia, together with Germany and France and such »advocates of human rights and international law« like communist China and Bashir Al-Asad’s Syria, opposed this operation.” (interia.pl, 2013/06/11)

This quotation not only places China in the same group as Russia, which could be harmful to this country’s image in Poland anyway, but also mentions this country together with a well-known regime of Syria. Moreover, it employs irony, which is a rather infrequent phenomenon in the language used in short news published in the Internet news media. As we mentioned above, interia.pl is a right-oriented portal, negative opinions about China could be expected in the content published there, but this statement is surprisingly negative.

“Because of the deadlock within the Security Council, where all actions against the Syrian regime are being blocked by its supporters – Russia and China – the US president, Barack Obama requested the Congress to approve time- and scope limited military intervention in Syria.” (onet.pl, 2013/09/04)

Again – China does support the Syrian regime and cooperates with Russia; such an information for the Polish audience usually would result in negative connotations.

“There is plenty of customers; new passports are being looked for by wealthy Russians, Chinese and Arabs. [...] Such an option is available to men of substance from China and other authoritarian countries.” (wp.pl, 2013/09/26)

This quotation comes from a longer article describing the passport and citizenship trade. Wealthy residents of the authoritarian countries could get another citizenship, which would be useful in case of a domestic unrest. It is worth to emphasize the way that China was presented in this text. It's description as authoritarian is not really surprising, but the fact that the well-situated Chinese expect (or fear) problems which could make them flee from the country, might suggest that China's political system is weaker than it seems to be according the government's statements.

"The People's Republic of China, which is led by corrupted and criminal mafia, called the Communist Party of China, destroys dignity and tramples upon every human right at home, is also the source of evil in Asia. The Asian criminal, totalitarian regimes of North Korea, Vietnam and Laos could not exist without its support. China has also been fuelling civil wars all over the world, supporting the African regimes (for instance in Sudan and Zimbabwe)." (Gość Niedzielny, 2013/12/10)

The above fragment could not have been omitted in the present analysis. Negative remarks in *Gość Niedzielny*, a Roman-Catholic journal, could be expected, but not this type of language. In just a few sentences, the author managed to gather all the negative constituents of China's image in the world. Corrupted, communist, criminal, and the source of evil in Asia, and, as it could be understood, the root of evil in almost every third-world country.

But let's turn back for a while, to the positives. In spite of the rather outdated image of China as backward, held by the older generation of Poles, in 9 cases it was depicted as a modern country.

"A gene-repairing virus? [...] the European Commission approved a medicine by the name Glydera to be sold in Europe. [...] It is the first commercial medicine that employs gene therapy technology, produced in the West, and the second, after China, in the world. [...] Gene therapy, based on adding some genetic material into the system to prevent some disease or cure it, has brought high hopes in the world." (Nasz Dziennik, 2013/11/18)

Two facts in the above text are worth emphasizing. At first, China is mentioned as the first country in the world that employed a science-fiction like technology, gene therapy, for the production of commercial medicines. This suggests that it should no longer be treated only as the cradle of copycat products and might use new technologies on its own. The second important fact is the source of this news, *Nasz Dziennik*,

could be expected to publish rather anti-China news, of the character such as the one from *Gość Niedzielny* quoted before. Therefore, an unnecessary positive remark about China is surprising, and might (but does not have to) indicate that the wind of changes would eventually influence the China's image in all the Polish media.

"In the wine-producing countries of Europe, such as France, Italy or Spain, wine consumption decreases. However, the situation in the USA and China is quite the contrary. In these countries, wine is very fashionable and desired by the customers." (Wprost.pl, 2013/07/10)

This news is not of an extreme importance, but its communicate is clear: two totally different countries, that are sometimes depicted as less civilized than Europe (due to different reasons, of course), decided to follow the steps of the Western culture and introduce wine-drinking culture.

However, in an equally numerous group of remarks, China was presented as an opponent (or even a future enemy) of other global powers, namely Russia, the USA and NATO.

"Turkish army will soon get 12 Chinese FD-2000 anti-aircraft rocket batteries as well as technology related to its production. Ankara published details of the 3.44 billion USD contract signed with China. This transaction was criticized by Washington, claiming that NATO countries should not buy military equipment from China." (Wprost.pl, 2013/10/04)

We decided to quote this article, since not only does it show tension between China and the USA/NATO, but also proves the already mentioned importance of China as a smaller countries' ally.

Traditionally, China being a distant country, has been perceived in Poland as exotic and strange. Such an image is still present in the media, and the strangeness-related code appeared 7 times in the database we analyzed. Let us quote two most significant texts.

A huge house was built on the roof of a 26-floor building in Beijing. "A huge house, surrounded by rocks, gardens and waterfall occupies about 1000 square meters. [...] The police has not intervened because Zhang (the owner) has been a member of the Communist Party group in his district." (Wprost.pl, 2013/11/01)

The source of this quotation, a rather lengthy text, described an illegally built house, located on the roof of a tall apartment building. Even though in Poland illegal construction sites are not uncommon, the very

idea of building a house on the top of such a building, creates the atmosphere of strangeness. Moreover, it mentions corruption related to the Communist Party, and such a picture would be met by the older part of the Polish audience with understanding.

“Social campaign against eating dog and cat meat raised a wave of protests among the people from Norther China. In Shenyang, the capital of Liaoning province, posters promoting the campaign were removed due to requests of the subway passengers. [...] One of the Chinese bloggers wrote »Do all these foundations think that while the Westerners do not eat dog and cat meat, they should be allowed to force the Chinese to do the same? Do they think they are gods? [...] In some regions of China, dog meat is believed to work as a cure or an anti-ghost remedy. [...] Dog meat is eaten mainly during winter, since the Chinese believe it to possess ‘hot energy’, needed during cold weather«.” (Onet.pl, 2013/08/13)

One of the China-related stereotypes, present not only in the Western countries (see Jura & Kaluzyńska, 2015), presents the Chinese as dog-eaters. In Poland, even the horse meat is not popular due to the historically created bond with these animals; the fact that some people might not only consume dog and cat meat, but also do it openly and perceive it as perfectly normal, would be shocking for most of the Polish readers.

Two groups of codes were assigned to 7 cases each, namely: China's domestic problems and the Chinese expansion in the world. The first group of articles was focused on political issues, related mainly to Xinjiang, and social ones, such as the following:

“Chinese authorities introduced a law that obliges the youth to call and visit their parents frequently. [...] At present, China tries to solve the problem of providing medical care to numerous older citizens” (Wprost.pl, 2013/07/04)

“Many Uyghurs claim to be discriminated by the Chinese, as well as persecuted on the basis of their culture and religion. Beijing accuses Uyghur groups of terrorism and separatist tendencies.” (Gazeta Wyborcza, 2013/08/13)

Articles of the second group are also interesting. They focus on the Chinese political and economic expansion, both in Asia and in the rest of the world, especially in Africa. These activities, however, were usually depicted as having negative consequences, either for local communities or for the international relations. The local issue is exceptionally visible in the content related to the Chinese presence in Africa.

“Economic expansion of China in Africa consists mainly of natural resources exploitation and infrastructure construction. [...] The Chinese are perceived as attractive partners by the African leaders because they do not mention the human rights, corruption nor democracy-related issues. [...] The main problem of the Sino-African cooperation is the fact that the Chinese ruthlessly take over local resources, using Chinese labour forces and equipment, but do not transfer technologies, therefore they do not support local development.” (Gazeta Polska Codziennie, 2013/08/23)

As we can see, the Chinese do exploit Africa ruthlessly and do not care about the local people. Moreover, Chinese citizens migrate to African countries in large numbers:

“The African Union Seat in Addis Ababa – a Chinese 'gift'. »It took 3 years and 200 million USD to build a modern complex of conference halls for 2500 seats and 20-floor office building of a symbolic height of 99.9m (African Union got its present name on 1999/09/09). It was sponsored by the Chinese, who called it a 'gift'. This building will serve not only as a landmark of Addis Ababa, but also will become a symbol of Sino-African relationships. [...] At present, there are about 1 million Chinese workers in Africa. Chinese citizens visit Africa more and more often for tourism reasons – last year, 60 thousand of them spent their holidays in Kenya and 75 thousand in South Africa«.” (Wp.pl, 2013/05/13)

However, the Chinese government does its best to sustain the Sino-African friendship and, by sponsoring large and noticeable buildings, marks its presence there.

The last three groups of codes refer to the issues that we expected to stumble upon more frequently, since they constitute the stereotypical image of China, namely: the problems related to the “made in China” fake wares, human rights, Tibet and the One-child Policy.

Manufacturing of fake ware in China results in consequences of not only economic character. Let us present a longer quotation concerning this problem.

“[...] famous Murano artists, Gianni Seguso, said: »We feel that our thousand year history has been trampled upon«. He and his fellow craftsmen say that it is often very difficult to say whether a specific product is original or fake, and the price might be the only indicator. [...] The case of Cremona luthiers is even more special, since the products of these craftsmen have been classified by UNESCO as a world heritage.” (Onet.pl, 2013/07/14)

It touches upon two issues – a possible Chinese disrespect towards other cultures and their heritage, and surprisingly, the high quality of China-made fake wares. However, the next article we chose as worth quoting in length, is focused on the Chinese citizens' disrespect towards their own people and culture (namely, the food culture) as well.

“Local media informed that a criminal group, selling rats, foxes and martens as lamb was smashed by the police in China. 904 people were arrested. [...] Among the arrested, there are 63 people who occupied themselves with buying foxes, rats, martens and minks for meat. These types of meat, after being processed, with some addition of gelatin, were sold as lamb in Shanghai and at Jiangsu province markets. The police claims that more than 20 tonnes of this fake lamb meat was confiscated. [...] According to data provided by the Supreme Court of China, between 2010 and 2012 as many as 2088 people were sentenced in 1533 cases concerning crimes related to contaminated or possibly dangerous food.” (Gazeta Wyborcza, 3/05/2013)

In the above text, China was depicted as a place in which more and more people try to make money without paying attention to the consequences of their actions for their co-citizens. A Polish reader might be convinced that the Chinese have nothing against consumption of exotic types of meat, however, the information about the increasing number of criminal cases related to food contamination would make them notice that such activities are not normal in China.

Another controversial issue that certainly influences China's image in the world (therefore in Poland as well) is the One-child policy. It was mentioned in a longer news story published at onet.pl describing problems rooted in this policy.

“[...] police rescued a group of more than 90 children, who were kidnapped by a human trafficking criminal group. About 300 suspects were arrested. In a result of this action, two kidnapped women were also freed. [...] Because of the restrictive one-child policy and parents' preferences, especially in the remote, countryside areas, where male children have been preferred, the number of children- and women-trafficking cases has been increasing in the last years. Women are being sold to male countryside residents, who, due to the gender imbalance, could not find a wife. The sociologists warn that the lack of gender balance creates a danger of increased number of sexual violence and human trafficking cases.” (Onet.pl, 2013/09/06)

Apart from sustaining China's image as the place in which people are not allowed to have children, it presents social consequences of traditional Chinese preferences for male children and criminal face of this country.

The last code appearing more frequently in the database was related to the issue we expected to be much more frequent, namely – the human rights and Tibet. Only three articles of the whole database were focused mainly on this issue, and they were presented more as a report, rather than ethical statements. For instance:

“Diplomatic relationships between Oslo and Beijing have been frozen since 2010, when the Norway Nobel Prize Committee awarded the jailed Chinese dissident, Liu Xiaobo, its prize. [...] Norway tried to re-establish proper relationships, but Beijing's reaction was far from enthusiastic. The statement sent to media by the Chinese embassy in Oslo emphasized that the Nobel Committee decision „was a contempt for the independence of the Chinese juridical system as well as an involvement into domestic issues of China.” (Gazeta Wyborcza, 2013/09/28)

The China-focused articles were published also by the tabloids – *Super Express* and *Fakt*, and they could be assigned to two main categories – general tabloid content, which might refer to any country of the world, and texts that presented some issues which are (or could be) perceived as specific for this country. The first group's catchphrases were as follows: “Male's suicide during shopping!”, “Construction worker waiting 20 hrs. for being rescued from a concrete mixer!”, “A plastic surgery clinic female customer sued by her husband for giving birth to ugly children!”, “Stolen eyeballs!”, etc. Although all these texts mentioned China, and had some influence on the reader's perception of this country, they might have substituted almost any other location. However, the other group carries a message “only in China!”. An attentive reader of a Polish tabloid would think of China as a country in which, for instance, people visit hospitals to have huge worms removed from their brains, sell pills containing human ashes and tapeworm eggs (a specific version of the TCM), hang animals on trees for fun, have ridiculous laws, like regulations for an allowed number of flies per square meter in public toilets, and so forth.

Summary

China and the Chinese definitely still do not constitute the point of focus in the Polish media, which turn their attention more to the local European area and Poland's neighbours. Nevertheless, both quantitative and qualitative analysis of the content of our database showed that the media image of China in Poland is not negative. It consists mainly of the issues related to the economy and development, and is rather distant from the one held by the generations born in Poland before the 1970s. China is no longer a Communist country with human resources as its only wealth. It has been depicted as a global power, modernized and expanding its influence all over the world (perhaps not in the most ethical way). This picture is quite similar with Bukowski's (2014) findings. He emphasized the prevalence of the articles referring to the present economic and political situation and a slightly more negative picture (however, he was not presenting a comparison to other countries). On the other hand, in Mrozowski's article (1997), China was presented mostly from the perspective of illegal migration and fake goods, which could be treated as a kind of an indicator of significant changes in the image of China and the Chinese.

Of course, strictly negative issues like the human rights and supporting non-democratic regimes are parts of this image, but they are not prevalent. However, it is worth to stress that on the basis of the quantitative analysis result, it can be stated that such picture is still quite popular in some of the Polish media (for example *Gazeta Wyborcza*). The only rather predictable constituent of this image is the China's exoticism, its strangeness, which is based both on its cultural distance and the political system. As an Asian country, with "strange" customs, including the Chinese dietary habits, long-lasting tradition of corruption and so on, China could not get rid of the orientalist shades on its image (especially in tabloids and tabloid-like media).

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